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The End of Identity Politics

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The election of Barack Obama last November 4 was the result of eight years of Constitutional abuse by the George W. Bush administration, at the behest of Transnational major corporations and financial institutions. The unimaginable suffering inflicted on the peoples of the world by U.S. corporate interests –including the United States government– began long before George W. Bush assumed the presidency in 2001. As Michael Parenti has reminded us, the United States government murdered two million Vietnamese between 1964 and 1974 with impunity. The crimes against humanity sponsored by the United States government during the period of the past century in Asia, in Africa, and in the Americas are well documented and need not be elaborated here.

In this historical context, the election of Barack Obama symbolizes a real progression, but it is important to understand the character of this progression. Today, the population of the United States of America is approaching 300 million, and within the next decade 50% of the U.S. population will no longer be white. Mixed marriages, along with high birth rates among the Hispanic, Black, and Asian populations within the U.S. assure that the so-called "white" population will be a minority across the continental U.S. A., not to mention the large urban areas where people of color already represent the majority of the population.

So what? Identity politics was coming to a natural death, and the November elections just fast forwarded it a few years, so that we old people, who had not expected to live to see it, in fact saw it. For the youth of the world it is perhaps exciting, and for many even inspirational, but business as usual is still on the agenda. If change is what the people want, it will have to come from them, and not from Barack Obama, or Colin Powell, or Condaleeza Rice, or Hilary Clinton, etc., etc....

If the people of the world really understand the genocidal risks that capitalism is now undertaking, if they become sober and serious about disarming the corporate elite who write the rule book that governs their lives (and their deaths), then there will have to be creative thinking on the local level and a redefinition of "legitimate" leadership at all levels. This transformation will require a change in relationships, from vassal/sengneur and slave/master and employee/manager communications to greater reciprocities between humans wherever they find themselves. This democratic transformation of old capitalist societies into young and dynamic egalitarian societies should not be resisted, and will not be resisted except by a very few.

The task before us today, no matter where we live in the world, is the do whatever we can to make certain that Barrack Obama will not be among those who resist Change. We must all unite to liberate Barrack Obama from the constraints of corporate control which now dominates the U.S. government, even if he thinks that he does not want to be liberated.